

necessity for more health care providers in Alaska. With the ending of SB241, the emergency courtesy licensees previously offered by the Alaska Board of Social Work Examiners would become null and void after November 15, 2020. Director Chambers asked the board to evaluate the need for a declaration of emergency, review and discuss the regulation language presented for Emergency Courtesy Licenses, and adopt the language if the need was agreed upon.

Unanimously, the board agreed the COVID-19 mental health emergency was still significant.

Agenda item #3 Proposed Solutions

Discussion was had regarding which license type should qualify for the Social Worker Emergency Courtesy License. It was decided that Clinical Social Workers should be the only Social Worker qualifying for the Emergency Courtesy License to ensure the highest standard of care is provided.

It was decided by the board that a 90-day maximum with the opportunity to renew would be the preferred timeframe for the Emergency Courtesy License. The renewal would need to be approved by the board if it was found that the emergency under which the courtesy license was issued was still in effect.

Agenda item #4 Adoption of Emergency Regulations

Proposal of Standard Regulations

A motion duly made by Geoffry McCormick, seconded by Colleen Vague, and approved by unanimous consent, was:

Resolved to declare an emergent necessity requiring additional social workers to be licensed quickly, to adopt 12 AAC 18.111 as amended to read "...may not exceed 90 days. An emergency courtesy license may be renewed for one additional period specified by the board, not to exceed 90 days" as emergency regulations and to be public noticed as permanent regulations.

The board requested that the public notice be sent out to all who currently hold the Emergency Courtesy License type.

Attorney, Harriet Milks, and Regulation Specialist Jun Maquis, left the meeting at 6:14pm.

Agenda item #5 Renewal Discussion

Earlier this year the board made it a requirement for all licensees to obtain three teletherapy Continuing Education hours that would be effective for the renewal period ending on October 30, 2020. This was not subsequently public noticed. Many questions have been received from Social Workers that were unaware that this new requirement pertained to them. During the renewal period, this new regulatory update was also not included on the renewal forms. Social Workers were then able to renew in good faith even if the teletherapy hours were not obtained.

During the upcoming audit it is likely that many will not have completed the teletherapy Continuing Education hours. This requirement cannot be waived since it is in regulation, however, the Division recommends that the board reach out to the licensees that have not yet taken these hours and ask them to receive the 3 required teletherapy Continuing Education hours rather than penalize them. The forms will also be corrected to show the teletherapy requirement for the future.

Agenda item #6 Meeting Adjourned

Adjourned at 6:25 PM

Respectfully Submitted By:

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1/13/2022

Date

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Mindy Swisher
Board Chairperson
Alaska State Board of Social Work Examiners

1/11/2022

Date